



THE INDEPENDENT

35p (IR 45p)

WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY 1996



THE EMPIRE TALKS BACK

QUESTIONS OF SPORT: £40,000 TO BE WON

HOTEL BREAKS

Two nights for the price of one
Page 10 for token and list

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MPs to break Murdoch grip on TV sport

Cross-party alliance hits tycoon

JOHN RENTOUL
Political Correspondent

Legislation to stop Rupert Murdoch buying up exclusive rights to top sporting events seemed inevitable last night as a cross-party alliance against the media tycoon formed in both Houses of Parliament.

Labour, which has been building bridges with Mr Murdoch, yesterday delivered what amounted to a snub by announcing it would back an amendment to the Broadcasting Bill in the House of Lords next month.

The move appears to guarantee a government defeat on the issue, as David Melfor, the former national heritage secretary, said yesterday that he and other Conservatives would support a ban in the Commons, where the government's majority is at present only three.

"If the people who want a change get together, the change will be made," he said.

Jack Cunningham, Labour's heritage spokesman, said a list of eight events, including the Olympics for which Mr Murdoch's News Corporation is bidding, should be preserved for the main terrestrial television channels.

The eight events - the Olympics, the World Cup, FA Cup and Scottish FA Cup finals, domestic Test cricket matches, Wimbledon, the Grand National and the Derby - are protected by the Government from being shown on "pay-per-view" channels, where viewers pay a fee to watch individual programmes.

However, exclusive rights can still be bought for showing on the main satellite and cable channels. Nine out of ten households do not have satellite or cable, and the rights to sporting events have increasingly been bought by Sky TV, the dominant subscription TV provider.

Dr Cunningham said: "A Labour government would also



Murdoch: £1.2bn bid for future Olympic Games

review the size and scope of the list." Obvious candidates for inclusion are Ryder Cup golf - already bought by Sky TV - and Five Nations rugby - in which Sky is said to be interested - but Labour would not make firm commitments yesterday. Mr Murdoch recently broke new ground by "buying up" and revolutionising rugby league by turning it into a summer sport.

The ban, which has obvious electoral appeal, cuts across attempts by Tony Blair to woo Mr Murdoch, which took the Labour leader to News Corp's retreat on Hayman Island, in Australia, last July. Mr Murdoch, owner of the *Sun*, *Times*, *News of the World* and *Sunday Times* as well as of Sky TV, has

said he could imagine supporting Mr Blair at the next election.

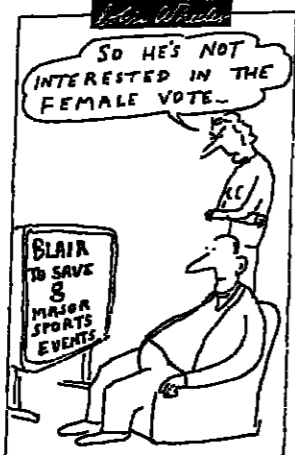
David Elstein, Head of Programming at Sky, said the list of protected sporting events was an "anachronism from the 1950s". Sky had built up a successful business without any of the events, and a ban would only damage sport. He asked: "Who is going to compensate sports bodies for the losses they suffer as a result of this?"

While proposing the new restraints on Mr Murdoch, Labour still tried hard yesterday to avoid giving him offence. Lord Donoghue, Labour's heritage spokesman in the House of Lords, said: "We are not interested in any campaign against Rupert Murdoch or any other newspaper proprietor. All we are concerned about is the principle of fair access."

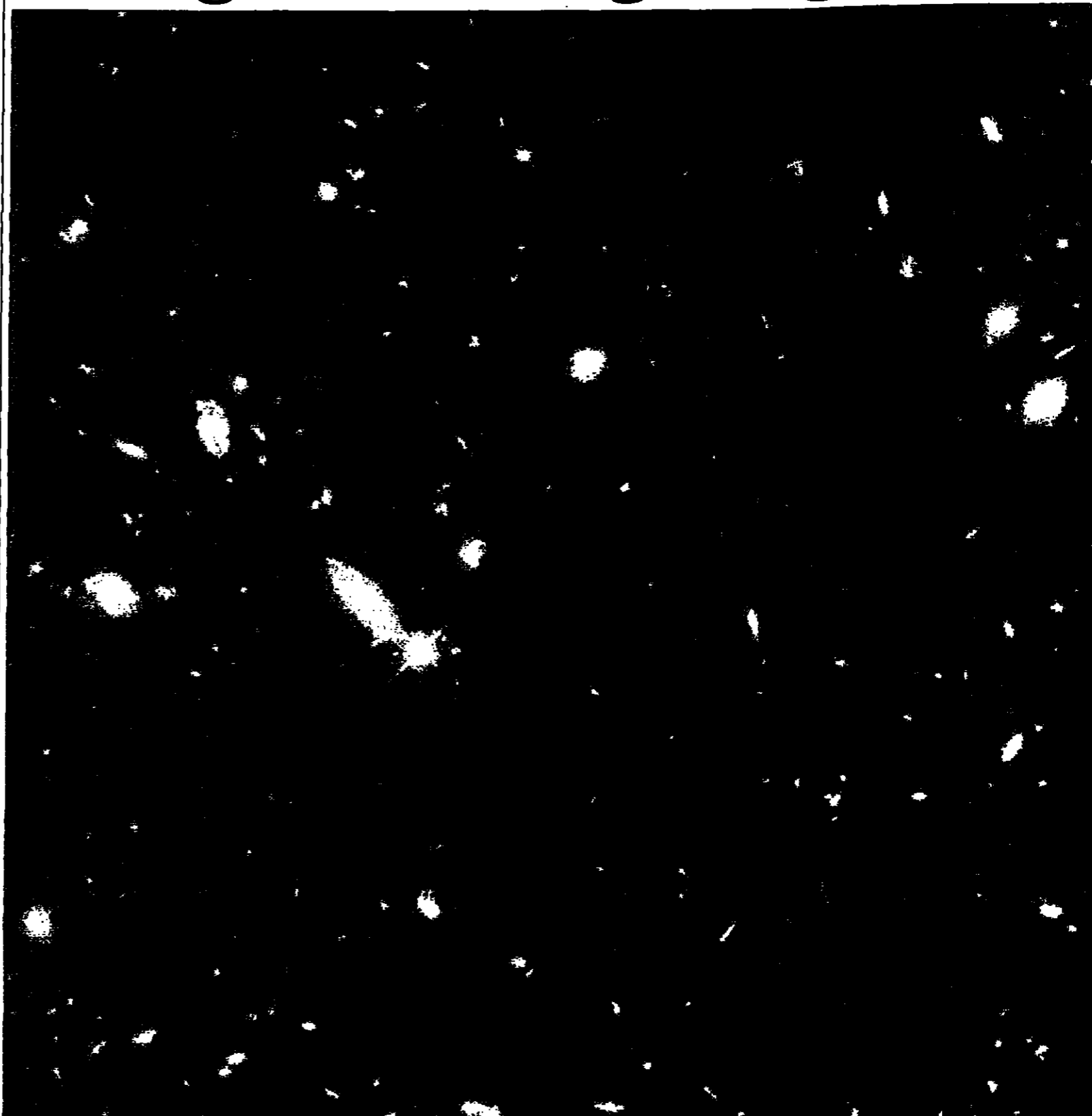
He told peers, who gave the Broadcasting Bill its second reading: "The poor, the old, and the unemployed will certainly not be able to afford much subscription or pay-as-you-view television: the BBC and ITV will not be able to afford to buy the rights to broadcast." He was backed by Lord Thomson of Monifieth for the Liberal Democrats, and is believed to have wide support among independent cross-benchers. If the Bill is amended in the Lords, it is unlikely to be reversed in the Commons.

The Prime Minister hinted in a written answer on Monday that the Government might accept the change: "I am aware of public debate on this issue, and we are keeping it under close review." David Melfor, the former Heritage Secretary, who introduced the 1990 Broadcasting Act, said last week that he had not foreseen that satellite subscription services would generate the revenue needed "to buy up the Crown Jewels of sport".

It was disclosed last week that Sky TV was ready to offer £1.2bn to secure exclusive European rights for the Olympic Games between 2000 and 2008.



Gazing into the beginning of time



Astronomers had to leave the camera shutter open for 10 days to get this image of more than 1,500 galaxies

Photograph: Nasa

Hubble image shows dawn of the universe

DANNY PENMAN
and PAUL VALIELY

What you can see above stretches the power of human comprehension to its limit. This photograph shows the universe near the moment of its creation.

The picture - the latest taken by the Hubble Space Telescope - amazed delegates at the meeting of the American Astronomical Society in San Antonio this week.

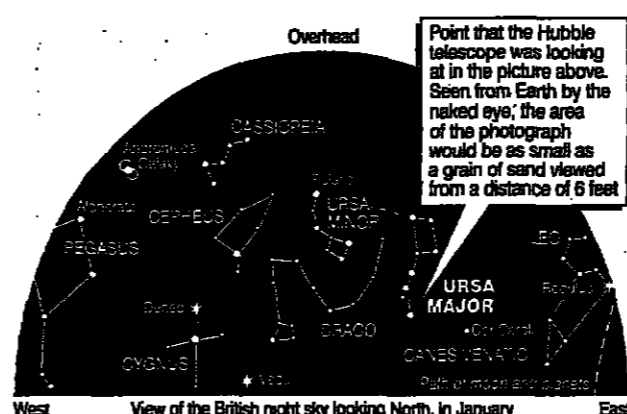
It would take 300,000 years to cross the frame of this picture in a spaceship travelling at 10 times the speed of light. It shows 1,500 galaxies in various stages of formation. The images are so faint they never before have been seen - the eye would need to be 4 billion times more powerful to perceive them.

And it may hold the answer to the question which has perplexed astronomers for generations: how do galaxies form? Each speck or swirl of light is a galaxy containing up to 100 billion stars all streaming away from the Earth at 19,000 miles per second.

Light from the brightest galaxies took about five billion years to reach the Earth. Light from the dimmest set off about 12-15 billion years ago - around the time when the universe was formed.

"As the images have come up on our screens, we have not been able to keep from wondering if we might somehow be seeing our own origins in all of this," Robert E. Williams, director of the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore, said.

The past 10 days have been



View of the British night sky looking North, in January

an unbelievable experience.

The photograph - which is the result of a single exposure in which the camera shutter was kept open for 10 days - focuses on an area which seen from the Earth was about the size of a large grain of sand held at arm's length. The camera was directed at a point in the sky near the handle of the Big Dipper, a part of the universe continuously in view of the orbiting telescope.

The result has forced Hubble astronomers to abandon the language of scientific precision and to speak only of "wonderment". It is a collection of "things we haven't seen before", Andrew S. Fruchter, another Hubble team member, said. There are elliptical shapes and spirals. Some are like beach balls and footballs. Others are long cigar-shaped clusters of stars.

The images may hold the answer to the enigma of how the existing galaxies came into being. These star groups are found throughout the universe but

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IN BRIEF

Hanging tragedy

The parents of a schoolgirl found choked to death on her bed after being told to tidy her room were discovered hanging in their home. Page 3

Winners to fund Scargill

Arthur Scargill plans to use the £100,000 political fund of the IUM to finance the Socialist Labour Party. Page 2

Rawler allegation

A novice crew were "sent to their deaths" by two men who on their unseaworthy trawler, court was told. Page 3

Minister reprimanded

Junior minister Alistair Burt has been "reprimanded" for a letter which attacked remarks by Baroness Thatcher. Page 2

ireeks seek new PM

ireec's socialists plan to elect new prime minister by the end of the week. Page 9

ole's wife accused

Elizabeth Dole, wife of the leading Republican presidential candidate, faces allegations of marital favouritism. Page 11

oday's weather

oggy and cold with wintry sun later on. Section Two, page 25



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Trawler crew 'sent to their deaths'



Two of the crew members of the *Pescado* who died, the skipper Neil Curry and his fiancée Jo Ann Thomas

A six-strong novice crew were "sent to their deaths" by two men who ran their unseaworthy trawler, a court was told yesterday.

The steel-hulled scalloper *Pescado* was unstable when it sailed from Falmouth, Cornwall, on 25 February 1991 without a qualified skipper, it was alleged.

After a so far unexplained capsizing, 13 miles off Dodman Point, south Cornwall, the crew of five men and one woman "were left to sink or swim", the prosecutor, Francis Gilbert QC, told the jury at Bristol Crown Court.

"In the event they all drowned," he said on the opening day of what could be the six-week manslaughter trial of Joseph O'Connor, 44, and Alan Ayres, 56.

The crew of the 100-ton Plymouth-registered vessel were only 15 minutes flying time by rescue helicopter from the Royal Naval Air Station at Culdroe when they died, Mr Gilbert said.

But one of the *Pescado*'s radios was broken and was not connected to a power supply. A short-wave radio was on board but none of the crew was a qualified operator.

"It is an irony the rescue ser-

vices were so close but unaware of the need for their help," the QC said.

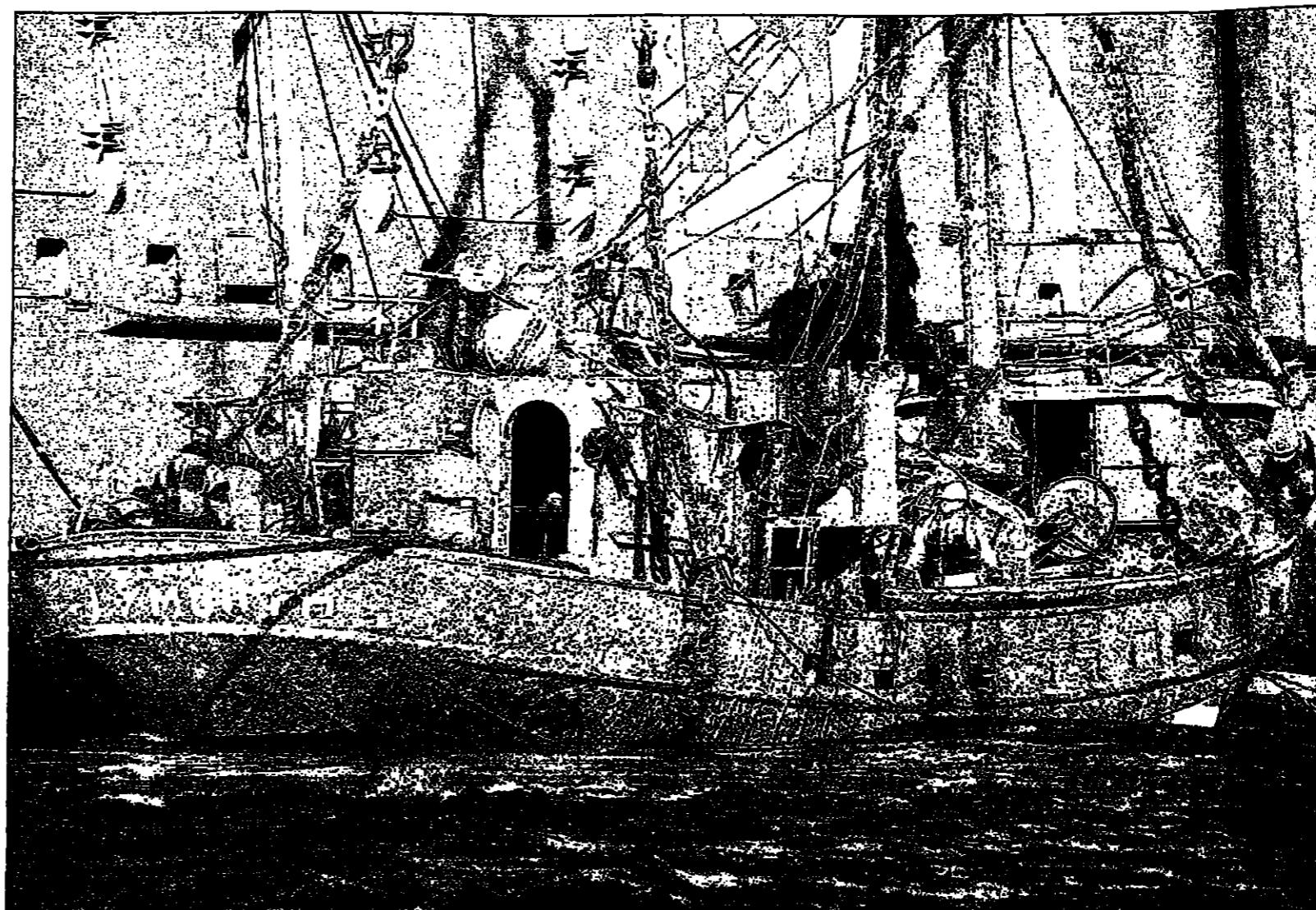
The vessel was not equipped with an emergency radio alert beacon and its sole out-of-date liferaft was "useless", and was lashed to the railings.

The Crown said that the vessel had been sent to sea without safety authorisation, following a refit "from barely more than being fit for scrap". Some of the crew would have survived if the required safety equipment had been on board, it was claimed.

"None of this crew had any qualification whatsoever - they were in effect novices sent to their deaths by the defendants," the prosecutor said.

"It is the Crown's case that at the time of the last fatal voyage, that *Pescado* was being operated by the two defendants effectively in partnership, and they are both responsible in manslaughter for the deaths of the crew," he told the jury.

Mr O'Connor, of Durnford Street, Plymouth, and Mr Ayres, of North Hill, Plymouth, were the managing agent and the director respectively of Guideway Ltd, which owned the 35-year-old *Pescado*. They have each pleaded not guilty to six manslaughter charges, alleging



Maritime tragedy: The *Pescado*, which capsized killing all six crew members, and its operators, Alan Ayres (below left) and Joseph O'Connor

breach of duty of care. It is said that the breach amounted to gross negligence, and was a substantial cause of their deaths.

Those who died were the skipper, Neil Curry, 28, from South Uist, Western Isles; his 22-year-old fiancée and ship's cook, Jo Ann Thomas, from Plymouth; 34-year-old Peter Birley, from Fleetwood, Lancs; Adrian Flynn, 21, from Lincoln; Sean Kelly, 17, from Brixham, Devon; and Steven Hardy, 30, from Plymouth.

As the majority of them had little or no experience of scallop fishing, they were "innocents" when they sailed on the last voyage.

Mr Gilbert claimed that although the *Pescado* was issued with a Department of Transport fishing vessel safety certificate

in 1987, it was never valid, because an engine was later replaced.

This vessel never, ever sailed within the law from the moment O'Connor bought her until she sank," said Mr Gilbert.

After buying the vessel in 1987, Mr O'Connor had rigged her as a scalloper before going bankrupt two years later.

He persuaded a friend, Richard Cox, to buy Guideway Ltd, and purchase the *Pescado* from the receiver, for £5,500 in March 1990.

Mr O'Connor supervised the later refitting and re-equipping of the vessel, an operation that was largely financed by Mr Ayres, said Mr Gilbert.

The Crown claimed that Mr O'Connor had deliberately avoided alerting the Department of Transport to the fin-

ished refit and was "hoping to get away with it".

Evidence pointed to the vessel being lost in a capsizing resulting from difficulties with the gear, with the crew being unable to remedy with the problem before she was dragged down. However, it may be said that it resulted from a collision with a surface vessel or submarine, Mr Gilbert told the jury.

But whatever the cause of the sinking, it was the lack of stability and the absence of safety equipment which was the most serious aspect of the case, Mr Gilbert said.

The charges follow a police investigation that was launched after the *Pescado* was raised from the seabed in a £250,000 operation in September 1993. The hearing was adjourned until today.



Lloyds offers couple a way out of ruin

STEVE BOGGAN and MARK LISTER

A couple who won £77,500 damages from Lloyds Bank have been offered a chance to avoid being bankrupted in a £150,000 counter-claim by the bank's lawyers.

Richard Spindler and Julia Verity made legal history last September when they were awarded damages over bad loan advice given by a branch manager. However, as the case resumed, they faced ruin because of a disputed claim over earlier mortgages which the bank says are still outstanding.

During yesterday's hearing at the High Court in Leeds, Mr Spindler, 36, an acupuncturist, and Mrs Verity, a 35-year-old teacher, both from Henley, in Oxfordshire, were offered a compromise which would leave them owing about £27,000 instead of the £160,000 initially claimed by the bank. They argue that they owe nothing.

Gregory Mitchell, counsel for the bank, said the couple owed £150,000 on loans, including the mortgage on a failed property speculation and interest. However, when making their statement of claim in the last case, the couple demanded interest only up to December 1990, instead of the present day.

Mr Mitchell said the bank, in its turn, was now prepared to return to December 1990 when the interest was lower on all outstanding accounts. Lloyds Bank would credit the couple with the £77,529 won at the earlier hearing which would then pay off all the loans and leave a mortgage debt of £27,000 pounds, plus the interest to date. That, amounting to about £10,000, would be offset by a claim for loss of earnings on Mrs Verity's part for about the same amount.

Mr Mitchell said: "My counter-claim still stands for the full figure, but so the plaintiffs don't have the full interest on their accounts... I can short-circuit it in the way I have done by returning to December 1990." It is understood the couple were considering the offer last night. The case continues.

Parents are found hanged after daughter's death

The parents of a schoolgirl found choked to death on her tie after being told to tidy her room were yesterday discovered hanged in their home.

Michelle Henry, 12, died two months ago after looping a blue silk tie round her neck and fixing the other end to the bedroom door handle.

Her parents Barbara, 38, and Michael, 37, had battled to come to terms with the tragedy. But yesterday Michelle's uncle, Derek Francis, - who originally found the young girl dead in her room - returned from a night shift to the home he shared with the family in Montpellier, Bristol, to discover his sister Barbara and Michael hanging from the staircase.

Last November, Mr Francis, a 34-year-old hotel cleaner, had found Michelle's body behind her bedroom door, the morning after he had scolded his niece for having an untidy room.

Mr Francis told an inquest into her death: "When I came back in the morning, Michelle's bedroom door was closed but the light was still on."

"I had words with her the night before about her room being untidy and I did not want to



Barbara Henry (left) and her daughter Michelle

trouble her, so I went downstairs to make myself a drink.

"Later on I knocked on the door two or three times and there was no reply. I pushed my way into the room and saw Michelle lying on the floor."

"I thought she had passed out or was sick. But then I noticed the tie had been knotted around the door handle and I realised she was dead."

His sister, a worker at a homeless project, had broken down after the inquest hearing.

"We are desperately trying to come to terms with her tragic

death - but I don't know how," Mrs Henry said.

"She was a very happy and sensible girl and I just cannot see her killing herself."

"We used to tell her off quite a lot for being untidy and she would be a bit grumpy for a while but it would never last."

Yesterday grieving relatives gathered at the family's three-bedroom terraced house.

Mrs Henry's cousin, Vida Tucker, 54, said: "We are a very close-knit family."

"Michelle's death hit us all very hard. Her parents never got

over her death and clearly they just couldn't handle it any more."

She added: "I saw them a few days ago and although they were smiling, under the surface they were both completely shattered."

"It takes time to come to terms with a tragedy like Michelle's death and I knew they could never forget it."

Mrs Henry's father, Granville, said: "I just can't believe what has happened. There was never any sign that they would do anything like this."

"They were very close to Michelle but they obviously couldn't come to terms with what happened."

"I can't believe this is happening," he added.

The Avon Coroner, Paul Forrest, recorded a verdict of accidental death at the inquest into Michelle's death in November.

He said at the hearing: "I have severe doubts about recording a verdict of suicide because a 12-year-old child is too young to be considered capable of planning to take her own life."

"It is more likely that Michelle's death was a result of an accident."

Sexual 'banter' led to dismissal

An insurance company branch where a manager is alleged to have harassed three women enjoyed a relaxed atmosphere where banter was freely exchanged, an industrial tribunal was told yesterday.

Ms Helen Gower, counsel for the manager, Michael Jennings, who is claiming unfair dismissal, said many of the staff at the Prudential office in south-east London enjoyed trading personal comments among themselves.

The tribunal in Croydon, south London, has heard allegations that Mr Jennings, 47, harassed three women at the branch. They cannot be named for legal reasons.

Ms Gower said boards erected on office walls to celebrate 25 years' service to the company by Mr Jennings included ref-

erences to his appearance. Among suggestions displayed for a possible retirement job was that he promoted slimming regimes. He appreciated the fact that he was a handsome man, she said.

One of the women, a 17-year-old trainee, complained of being bombarded with gifts from Mr Jennings, including perfume, a ring, and a note asking her to marry him, the tribunal was told.

She became depressed at his unwanted attention, losing interest in her appearance and failing to wash her hair or change her clothes. She confided in other members of staff, Tony McDonald, the personnel manager who investigated the harassment claims, told the tribunal. He said he had rejected claims that the woman was fo-

menting discontent against her boss and said it was only "human nature" for workmates to discuss her accusations. He said he believed that there was a case to answer.

The teenager felt too embarrassed to speak officially of her ordeal, Mr McDonald said, until she was dismissed for "budgetary reasons".

The tribunal later heard how Mr Jennings' new wife, Katrina, had written to the division's general manager saying the couple were experiencing difficulties, and accusing the trainee of fabrication.

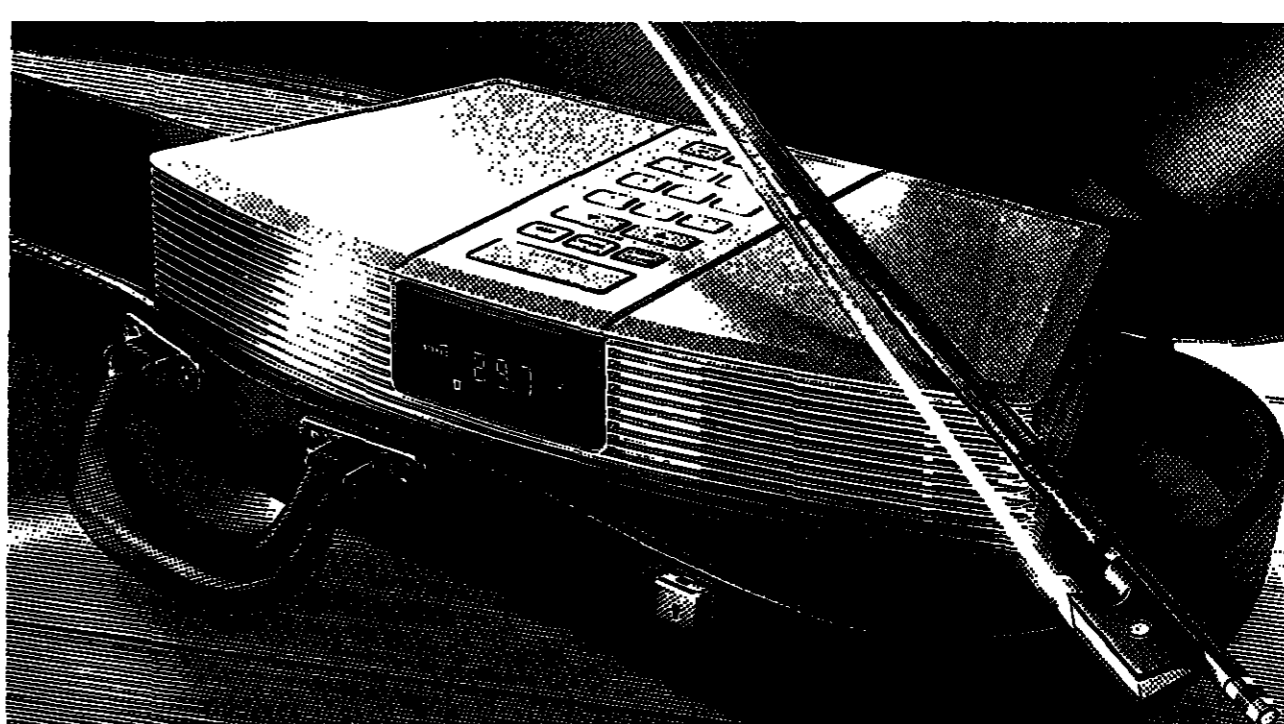
The tribunal was also told that Mr Jennings joked publicly about a female sales manager's failure to clinch two deals, parodying the phrase used in the office for failure to clinch a deal

- a blow out - as a "blow job" saying the woman had had "two blow jobs in one night". He also openly criticised her decision to move in with a colleague.

In another incident, he told the woman, who had been speaking to a prospective job applicant: "You were almost in bed with him". Mr Sutton told the tribunal that the remarks humiliated her. "She was being made out to be a tart," he said.

Robin Taylor, regional manager of Prudential's central region who oversaw the final stages of the disciplinary proceedings, said he rejected Mr Jennings' claim that the three women had hatched a plot to secure his downfall and the premise that his sexual innuendoes were typical.

The hearing resumes today.



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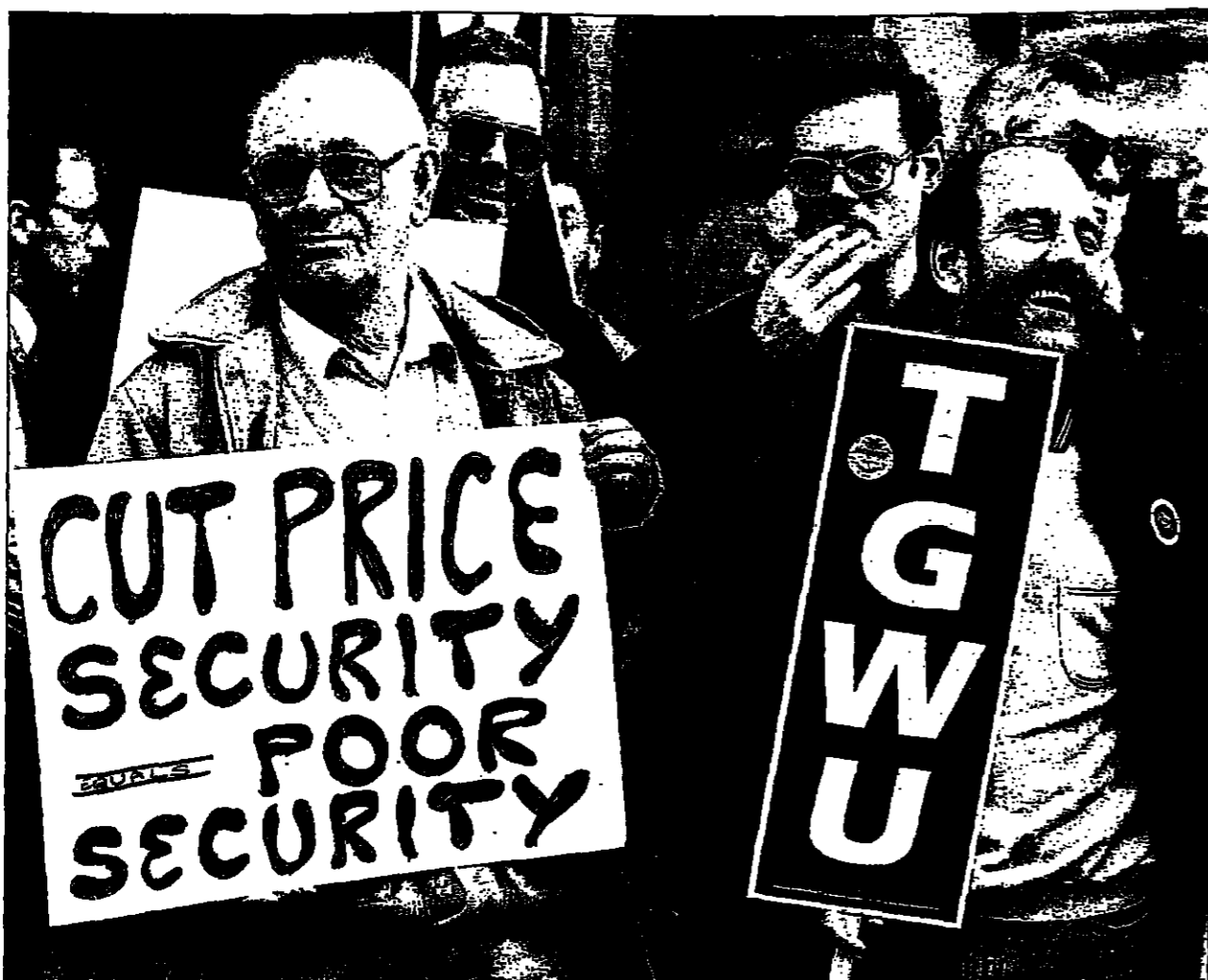
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4
politics

On guard: Security staff protesting outside the House of Commons yesterday against plans to privatise the Custody Service, which protects government and other high-profile buildings in London. Photograph: Edward Webb

Rifkind promises to keep 'beacon of freedom' alight

Foreign Secretary heads off Labour attack over World Service □ MPs back Private Bill to restrict tobacco adverts

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, yesterday bought his way out of trouble in the Commons over cuts in the BBC World Service with an announcement that private sector money could be used to fund running costs. Faced with the prospect of a rebellion by Tory backbenchers, Mr Rifkind said the Government did not want to do anything that would damage the World Service.

Executives of the Foreign Office-funded service met at the weekend to consider cuts in its 42 language broadcasts in order to accommodate cuts of £4.5m in its 1997-98 operating costs – down to £132m – and a £22m cut in capital spending over the three years 1996-99.

Opening the debate, Robin Cook, shadow Foreign Secretary, described the World Service as a "beacon of freedom" and said cuts would damage Britain's diplomatic influence and trade. But, following Mr Rifkind's concession, the Labour motion expressing alarm, at the "likely reduction in the range of foreign language broadcasts was rejected by 310 to 291."

Speaking after the vote Mr Cook said he was pleased the Government had changed its mind and decided to be more flexible over funding. "This would have been a shoddy way to have treated one of this country's greatest assets."

Emma Nicholson, in her first speech from the Liberal Democrat benches since quitting the Tory ranks, said the value of the World Service was incalculable. "I fear that where dictators and oppressors have failed, our own Treasury book-keepers, aided by weak-willed, blinkered, ostrich-minded ministers, will succeed, weakening, or eventually silencing altogether, a powerful voice for Britain."

But Mr Rifkind said the Government had a duty to discuss with the BBC whether their concerns were justified and see if it could make do with slightly reduced resources. "We have no intention of seeing the removal of successful language services," the Foreign Secretary said. And, paving the way for his offer to Tory critics, he said there was evidence that "life is going to be considerably easier for the World Service than they fear."

Inside Parliament
Stephen Goodwin

The biggest change asked of the BBC is to raise private finance to replace the £22m cut from capital spending – mainly to pay for a new transmitter in Oman for the Arabic service and requirements at its Bush House headquarters.

"On the evidence that is now accumulating it would appear that there is scope for around £30m of private funding," – more than meeting the needs of the capital programme.

Mr Rifkind told MPs that both he and the Chief Secretary, William Waldegrave, would "look sympathetically" at providing the flexibility to allow resources to be moved into the operating account.

While the concession was accepted with cautious relief by some backbenchers, former prime minister Sir Edward Heath remained hostile to the introduction of private finance into the service, claiming it threatened the BBC's reputation for independence.

"Privatisation can go too far. This is a sphere which ought to remain entirely under BBC control."

Sir Patrick Cormack, Tory MP for South Staffordshire, said he did not for one half-second question Mr Rifkind's commitment, still less his integrity. "But I am troubled about the injection and still more the potential reliance on private finance for the BBC."

"It is almost a contradiction in terms. There are some things which quite rightly and properly should be funded from the public purse."

MPs voted by 158 to 39 in support of a move to ban advertising and sports sponsorship by tobacco companies. Though Simon Hughes's Tobacco (Protection of Children and Restriction of Promotion) Bill has no chance of becoming law because of the tight timetable for backbench legislation, its introduction was a significant expression of MPs' opinion.

Mr Hughes, Liberal Democrat MP for Southwark and Bermondsey, said he wanted to protect young people from the "insidious" effects of tobacco advertising. It had been banned from television and radio and it was now time to ban it from billboards and sports events.

The British Medical Association is putting pressure on ministers to give its members better protection in the surgery against violent patients

Doctors demand new security from attack

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

Doctors' leaders who are due to meet ministers tomorrow to demand better security in surgeries are also pressing police chiefs to agree that they should be allowed to examine violent patients in police stations instead of on practice premises.

Doctors are worried about the threat of attacks both from mentally ill patients who have been released into the community and from drug addicts.

The British Medical Association will put pressure on Stephen Dorrell, Secretary of State for Health, at a meeting tomorrow, arguing that family doctors are in the front line in dealing with potentially dangerous patients.

The BMA is not pressing for guards to be appointed to all GP surgeries but it has asked the Government to consider creating high-security surgeries with protection for doctors where selected patients could be treated.

Officials at the Department of Health are considering the BMA's proposals as ministers prepare to face renewed criticism over the release of mentally ill patients into the community.

Mr Dorrell, who is meeting the BMA to discuss the renegotiation of their contract, will announce details shortly of a new patients' charter for the mentally ill. It will give patients specific rights to treatment in the community, and lay duties on health authorities to provide the services.

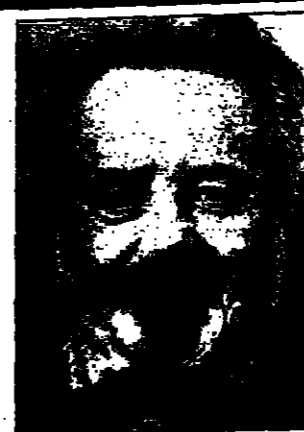
Mr Dorrell underlined his concern in a review of the National Health Service in a speech last week at Manchester Business School. "A modern mental health service needs to provide a spectrum of care, including acute hospital space, as well as sheltered support, community mental health teams and facilities to deal with crisis care."

"When those services are properly provided, and the links with social services all work properly, we deliver a high-quality service. But there are too many

GPs who suffered injury because of their profession



June 1993 Dr Gerald Flack, a Kent GP shot by a former patient



October 1994 Dr Don Mackay, an Airdrie GP fatally stabbed in his surgery



December 1995 Dr Anthony Inwale, London GP stabbed by a patient

examples of breakdown and too many areas where some part of the jigsaw is missing," he said.

In highlighting "variations" in national care for the mentally ill, Mr Dorrell said the public had been led to believe that it was the Government's policy to close all acute mental health facilities and treat all patients in the community, but "that is not and never has been an accurate description of our policy".

A comprehensive care plan for dealing with psychiatric patients in the community should have been in place by the end of last month. But reports suggested that in some cases cover

for such patients was missing. Mr Dorrell has admitted that there are now a series of reports, including national accounts from bodies such as the Audit Commission and local ones, of tragic incidents involving mentally ill patients "which show quite clearly that further urgent work is needed to deliver good mental health services across the country as a whole".

He said there needed to be a continuing focus on providing the full range of care, including in-patient care and longer-term professional staff provision for those with the most pressing needs.

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'Gridlock' in secure beds adds to crisis on wards

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

Health managers claim that "gridlock" in the secure beds designed to take the most disturbed and potentially violent offenders has contributed to the dangerous pressures on acute psychiatric wards.

It is one of six factors that have led to what the Mental Health Act Commission has called a "crisis" in mental health services which it says has worsened over the past two years.

The diversion of mentally ill offenders from prison to hospitals has led to the three tiers of locked wards – medium secure, and regional secure units, and the special hospitals such as Broadmoor – "sitting up", increasing the difficulty of exchanging patients between them.

At one end of the system, approaching a quarter of Broadmoor's 450 patients could be discharged to a less secure environment if space was available, Liz Hill, clinical unit manager at the special hospital, says.

At the other end, ordinary acute wards are having to handle growing numbers of seriously disturbed patients because they cannot be moved up to more secure accommodation. More medium secure beds are being built – numbers are due to rise from about 700 to 1,000 by March and 1,200 by December in a £45m programme.

But both the Mental Health Act Commission and the Royal College of Psychiatrists fear that few of the places will be available to support local services. The total still stands well below the 2,000 places that the

Butler report calculated were needed 20 years ago. Other factors in the crisis, according to the commission, which acts as a watchdog for patients detained under the Mental Health Act, include:

■ An underestimate of how many beds were needed to allow for the occasional relapses that people discharged from long-term care suffer;

■ Discovery of previously undetected cases by new community teams;

■ Too few 24-hour nursed beds outside hospital for patients who cannot cope on their own;

■ Homelessness, and

■ Premature discharge in order to free beds which produces "revolving door" admissions, where patients suffer early return to hospital.

The result is a more disturbed mix of patients on wards

where growing numbers are formally detained. The commission highlighted the case of a martial arts expert who became highly disturbed on an ordinary psychiatric ward. He was put into seclusion but smashed the door. He was only restrained when the police arrived. No secure bed could be found for him for a week, during which time he had to be kept heavily sedated and barricaded into the seclusion room – treatment the staff and commission agreed was "inhumane".

The commission says that while many long-stay patients have successfully transferred to Care in the Community, "there remains a core of patients unable to make the transition and for whom community care is arguably the least preferred option. This reality can be lost in the pressure for change."

Asylum rules face Lords challenge

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Political Correspondent

A key test of Labour's attitude to the Government's drive to curb the number of asylum seekers is looming in a House of Lords vote on the withdrawal of welfare benefits from applicants awaiting appeals.

While Labour has put down a "prayer" deploring regulations set to bring in the change by 5 February, by convention Opposition peers do not seek to vote down legislation in its entirety.

But the Liberal Democrat health and social security spokesman, Earl Russell, has called on Labour to vote for a motion that he has tabled which does not oppose the regulations as such, but urges that following their implementation the Government should "ensure that asylum seekers pursuing appeals have visible legal means of support pending the conclusion of their appeals".

A vote in favour of the motion when the regulations come before the House on 30 January would be embarrassing for the Government but could also have important practical ramifications, because it would show there was insufficient political backing to pursue the abolition of a fallback source of help under the 1989 Children Act.

The Act puts a duty on local councils to provide support and accommodation for children in need in their areas.

A combination of Labour and Liberal Democrat support, plus expected backing from some Tory rebels and most of

the bishops, could ensure the vote is won, Liberal Democrat strategists argued yesterday.

A Labour Lords source said the party felt "very strongly about these regulations, hence our prayer" – but it was still reflecting on whether to whip its peers to vote for the motion.

The Labour front bench is nervous because of threats from the Conservatives that if Labour voted down government legislation they would exploit their greater numbers to the full in Opposition. But some critics allege that the party might be tempted to drag its feet because the asylum seekers' cause is not popular with the electorate.

The Liberal Democrats pointed out that Labour had been happy to support use of the motion procedure on 5 December when the Government was defeated over probation officers' training. On that occasion peers voted by 108 to 85 for higher levels of training than those put forward by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary.

Lord Russell said yesterday: "I don't believe in using starvation as an instrument of policy, and I cannot see any legal way these people can get enough to eat."

The bishops, led by the Bishop of Ripon, are expected to give strong support to the motion, along with Tory peers such as Baroness Flather, who led a modest revolt on the 1993 Asylum Bill. Opponents of the regulations fear that unless Labour instructs its peers to attend, many will have left the House before the vote is taken.

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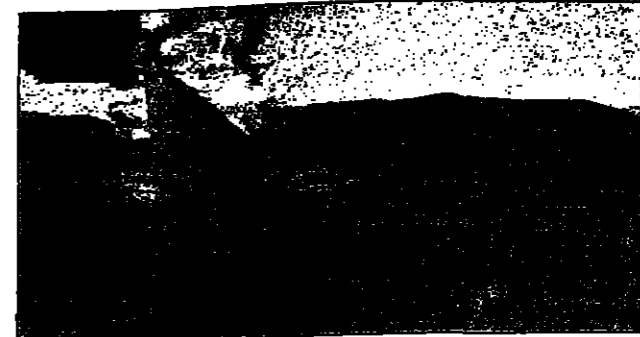
Air aces test Eurofighter in a fantasy flight from reality



Image of war: Lt Kevin Seymour using the flight simulator at the launch of the new game Photograph: Dillon Bryden



Sky's the limit: The simulated effect of flying a Eurofighter 2000C, the next generation of fighter jets



WILL BENNETT

In the skies over an unidentified nation yesterday, Flt Lt Sandy Gordon, of the RAF, and Lt Kevin Seymour, of the Fleet Air Arm, fought a fierce aerial battle, each twisting and turning to avoid being shot down.

The honour of the Royal Navy was narrowly maintained by Lt Seymour who shot down Flt Lt Gordon seconds before his own fighter was reduced to scrap metal by a missile.

In reality, Flt Lt Gordon, who flew Tornado F3 fighters during the Gulf war, and Lt Seymour, who spent two years patrolling

Bosnia in Harrier jump-jets, were taking part in the launch of a new computer game.

But the fact they were there illustrates how the boundaries between fantasy and reality in the computer world are becoming blurred, with combat simulators bridging the two.

The two fighter pilots were playing a CD-ROM game that simulates flying the Eurofighter 2000, the next generation of fighter being jointly produced by Britain, Germany, Italy and Spain. Ironically, the game is available six years before the plane is due to be in service.

But Digital Image Design (DID), designers of the Eurofighter game TFX:EF2000, have also produced Sigma, a cockpit training simulator for the Ministry of Defence already in use at RAF bases. The company, based in Warrington, Lancashire, was asked to design Sigma after an earlier fighter simulator computer game became a best-seller.

When DID started work on TFX:EF2000 it was given access to declassified information by British Aerospace, the UK contractors for Eurofighter, who also sent representatives to yesterday's launch.

While researching the game, DID made contacts in the RAF that culminated in the company landing a contract for a laser-guided weapons simulator, for pilots to practise precision bombing. The company is now involved in projects for all three armed services.

No computer game can imitate exactly what it is like to be a fighter pilot. But some tactics are as effective in fantasy as in real life. Lt Seymour scored his winning hit by lurking above Flt Lt Gordon's airfield, waiting for him to take off. The Americans used the same tactics against the Iraqis in the Gulf war.

Train death prompts call for new fire escape drill

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport correspondent

British Rail has been asked to improve emergency procedures on all its trains following criticisms in a report into a fire on board a train in Maidenhead, Berkshire, last year.

One man died in the incident on 8 September, when he jumped out of the train into the path of an oncoming train, after fire broke out on the high-speed train travelling from Paddington to Swansea.

Mike Holmes, the inspector who investigated the accident for the Health and Safety Executive, found that the cause of the fire was that a diesel tank fell off the front engine and the spill fuel resulted in a severe fire which affected two coaches but fortunately, according to Mr Holmes, "did not spread on to seating".

As a result of faulty maintenance, the bolts holding the tank had fallen off or sheared and when all other similar trains were inspected a "small number of bolt deficiencies" were found, but "none posed a danger".

Mr Holmes's report says that there should be "improved instructions and procedures" for the fitting of fuel-tank securing bolts and that changes in the way tanks are held on to engines should be considered.

However, the main focus of his 10 recommendations is on the way that emergencies are dealt with by train crew.

The passenger who died, Ian Jones, a civil servant, was killed in the ensuing panic which was made worse by the difficulties of communication between train staff and passengers.

There were criticisms from some passengers that the crew had been too busy identifying the cause of the fire to communicate instructions to passengers. One passenger later

wrote to the *Independent* saying other deaths had only been narrowly avoided.

Terence Cudbird said: "A passenger in front of me half opened the carriage door on the 'wrong side' but was persuaded not to jump. Seconds later the express from Bristol came by at high speed."

Mr Cudbird asked: "Do the rail companies have an evacuation policy at all?"

In fact, Mr Holmes clearly states that the emergency procedures are inadequate and recommends "a review of emergency equipment and detaining facilities provided for passengers should be undertaken".

He adds that procedures concerned with "the control of passengers in emergency situations" should be reviewed.

One specific problem was that the staff can, at present, only communicate with all passengers through loudspeaker systems from a very limited number of locations and in an emergency it may be necessary to communicate quickly with the passengers. Mr Holmes has recommended that the use of pre-recorded or automatic announcements should be considered.

Mr Holmes also said the role, effectiveness and accessibility of hammers should be reassessed, as should be the accessibility of door handles and the use of signs and instructions. At present, British Rail is the sole train operator, although private companies are due to take over the Paddington InterCity services next month.

An electrical short-circuit was blamed for a fire on board the 5.35am Bristol to London InterCity train yesterday. The blaze was put out by automatic fire extinguishers. There were no injuries and passengers were taken back to Bristol to continue their journey on another train.



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DAILY POEM

Innocence: 1945

By Adrienne Rich

"The beauty of it was the guilt. It entered us, quick schnapps, forked tongue of ice. The guilt made us feel innocent again. We had done nothing while some extreme measures were taken. We drifted. In the Snow Queen's huge ballroom had dreamed of the whole world and a new pair of skates. But we had suffered too. The miracle was: felt nothing. Felt we had done nothing. Nothing to do. Felt free. And we had suffered, too. It was that freedom we craved, cold needle in the bloodstream. Guilt after all was a feeling."

Adrienne Rich, one of America's most respected poets, was born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1929 and was educated at Radcliffe College. She has published 16 volumes of poetry and four prose works, the most recent, from which this poem is taken, being *Dark Fields of the Republic: Poems 1991-1995* (Norton, £7.50). Her staunch support of the rights of the individual, across racial and political divides, and her ability to peer into the chaos engendered when these rights are ignored, has caused Nadine Gordimer to describe her as "the Blake of American letters".

Dark Fields of the Republic by Adrienne Rich is also available on audiocassette, read by the author, at a combined price of £18.95 for hardback and cassette (Norton).



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Timothy Sneed.



RECEIVED

Lawyers in the dock: Need for reform highlighted as two-thirds of clients unhappy with redress procedure

Complaints to solicitors hit 'wall' of red tape

STEPHEN WARD
Legal Affairs Correspondent

People who complain about poor work by solicitors face a wall of delays, unhelpfulness and bureaucracy, a survey by the Law Society reveals today.

Solicitors themselves often ignore grievances completely, and the Solicitors Complaints Bureau, the next stage for complainants, left most clients unhappy.

The damning findings come from written responses in a survey of more than 1,000 people who have tried to seek redress. Two-thirds of those whose cases had been settled through the bureau said they were "very dissatisfied" at the outcome. Of those whose complaints had been referred back to solicitors themselves to handle, more than half were "fairly" or "very" dissatisfied.

Few thought the bureau was independent - most believed it was on the side of solicitors.

The profession is already committed to reforming complaints handling, partly because of the cost of processing more than 20,000 cases each year, which solicitors have to fund. The society is due to publish proposals for a new system in the spring, which would change the name of the bureau to the Supervisory Agency for Solicitors, and would expect solicitors to deal with complaints more effectively within the firm.

The head of the bureau, Veronica Lowe, has resigned in anticipation of the reforms with an £80,000 pay-off. She has not yet been replaced.

The biggest number of complaints against solicitors were for excessive delay, followed by not responding to calls, instructions not being followed, excessive bills, not being warned about the cost in advance, and money or documents being kept too long.

Many solicitors were so re-

luctant to settle grievances that in two-thirds of cases complainants did not know their solicitors had an internal complaints procedure until they took the case to the bureau. Half of those who complained said their solicitor took no notice, or made no attempt to investigate or answer their grievance.

When complainants reached the bureau, their main complaint was on the further delays and inattention they encountered. Two-thirds were not told how long their case would take.

When asked about the outcome of their complaints to the bureau, a quarter had been told the case could not be taken further, and another quarter did not know if the case was still being handled or not.

In a statement accompanying the report, the Law Society president, Martin Mears, said: "The survey makes a positive contribution towards practical reform of the bureau. It emphasises also the need for all solicitors to take their clients' complaints seriously."

Yesterday's report was welcomed by long-term critics of the profession's complaints handling. Michael Barnes, the Legal Services Ombudsman who is the arbiter in 10 per cent of the cases which go to the bureau, said he had been urging the Law Society to carry out a survey for years. The picture produced was bleak, he said.

The procedures were too cumbersome and stronger enforcement powers were needed.

Ruth Evans, director of the National Consumer Council, said the results confirmed their analysis of the failings of the bureau in December 1994. She said: "Until solicitors take more responsibility for dealing with complaints themselves, it will be impossible for the bureau to provide an adequate service for the most difficult cases."



Case work: Sally Anne Morrison and her father Alec, who turned to the Ombudsman after dissatisfaction with the SCB Photograph: Rob Stratton

SCB 'stonewalled' over lost file claim

PETER VICTOR

CASE STUDY

Sally Anne Morrison's complaint to the Solicitors' Complaints Bureau should have been simple to deal with. But six years, thousands of pounds and hundreds of pages of correspondence later, she fights on. Ms Morrison, 33, from Llanelli, Cymru, took a former tenant to court in 1989 for the unpaid rent and damage to her two-bedroomed flat. But before the case could be heard, she says, her solicitor misplaced her file. "First he said he'd given it back to me, then he said he'd given it to the court," she said. "Then he changed his mind again and said he didn't know where it was."

Her case collapsed and she was left to find about £5,000 for repairs and mortgage arrears. She worked at two jobs and eventually started a small taxi business.

"For the money and trouble it cost me it would have been cheaper to let him keep the flat," she said ruefully.

After trying to get her file back without success, Ms Morrison sought redress through the SCB in February 1993. Her father Alec, a retired businessman, took up the cudgels on her behalf when she could not find the time.

The SCB wrote back initially saying she had no grounds for complaint as the solicitor had returned the files. The Morrisons persisted.

The solicitor then said he had passed the files to a court clerk. Mr Morrison went to the court and was told by the clerks that

they never had the file. "Month after month went by," Mr Morrison said. "They [the SCB] did everything they could to defend that solicitor. Then they wrote to us saying if he has lost the case notes, then he has lost them."

"They stonewalled and then finally in November 1994 the SCB gave us leave to appeal. The Morrisons, by this time thoroughly disgusted with the SCB, took their case to the legal ombudsman in December 1994. Finally, after five years of

struggle with the SCB, the legal ombudsman confirmed last February that it would be investigating the Morrisons' case against the solicitor.

"The SCB are a solicitors' protection bureau in my opinion," Mr Morrison said. "There has to be a complete change to this complaints system, with somebody totally independent in charge. It takes the average person 56 days' work to earn enough to pay a solicitor for one day's work. No wonder most people are reluctant to fight them."

Inquiry into abuse claims at church-run residential home

JOHN ARLIDGE
Scotland Correspondent

An investigation has begun into allegations of sexual abuse and fraud at a publicly funded residential home for mentally handicapped people run by evangelical Christians.

Former patients at the Humble Village Centre, near Edinburgh, which was run by the private Algrade Trust, claim that they were forced to live in degrading conditions. One former resident has alleged that a senior care worker sexually abused him and seven others say they were physically assaulted.

Lothian and Borders Police confirmed yesterday that they were investigating the allegations. Detectives are also examining claims of fraud against the Algrade Trust. Senior officials, including the trust's director, Betty Waugh, have been accused of forcing up to 32 patients to draw up wills leaving all their possessions to trustees. Lothian Regional Council and Scottish Charities' Office inspectors are also examining separate claims that Miss Waugh used Humble's social security



In a state: Humble where patients claim they were abused

budget to buy a string of properties worth up to £1m. Humble received £400,000 a year from the Department of Social Security to care for patients.

The allegations, in a BBC Scotland documentary to be screened tomorrow, have prompted calls for a government inquiry. John Home Robertson, the Labour MP for East Lothian, said yesterday he was "disappointed and angry at the failure of central government agencies" to deal with problems at the centre which were identified up to 10 years ago. "This is a

scandal. Evidence has come to light that patients have suffered from fraud, exploitation and abuse. We must find out what went wrong and establish ways to make sure this sort of thing cannot happen again," he said.

Humble, which caters for up to 40 children and adults with learning difficulties, was set up 25 years ago by the Algrade Trust. After trustees ignored warnings from Lothian Regional Council to improve conditions at the home, councillors launched an inquiry in 1994. Inspectors found that buildings

had no central heating, bathrooms were filthy and residents were forced to eat tinned horse meat from surplus European Union stocks.

Shocked by the findings, social services chiefs forced the Algrade trustees to resign. The Church of Scotland took over the residential care home last summer and kirk officials, who say they believe patients' allegations of abuse, moved residents into new accommodation.

Ivan Middleton, spokesman for the council's social services department, said that the patients were now learning domestic skills as a stepping-stone to moving back into the community.

The mother of one of the patients who claims he was assaulted yesterday angrily attacked Miss Waugh. Jeannette MacConnachie, whose son Stuart says a senior care worker punched him, said: "I'll never forgive her for what she has done, because she said she would look after him and she didn't. I hope she rots in hell."

Miss Waugh, who now runs a café near Humble, has refused to comment on the scandal.

Children in care 'denied basic rights'

GLENDIA COOPER

Children in residential care have been denied "basic human rights" and have had their allegations of abuse dismissed, according to a leading children's charity. A report, *So Who Are We Meant To Trust Now?* - Responding to Abuse in Care, for

the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, contains detailed case histories of residents' experiences of living in care ranging from sexual, physical and emotional abuse to bullying both by staff and fellow residents.

The young people talk about staff gangling up on them, being denied basic rights such as privacy, being discriminated against unfairly and feelings of abuse by the care system itself.

Children reported that education was withdrawn as a form of punishment, male staff watched young women bathe and use the lavatory. Sanitary protection was also withdrawn as punishment and young women's periods were checked and logged in a "period book". Children also reported having to wear non-identified communal clothing or having to work up enough good behaviour

"points" before they could wear their own clothes. They were not told their rights or allowed to sit in on meetings to discuss their welfare. When they made complaints they often felt they were excluded from the investigation procedure.

Vicky, who was beaten up, shown pornographic material and given alcohol to make her sleep, said that the investigation into her complaints was minimal. "My case was investigated by a male social services manager who was a friend of the workers who had abused me. I had an 'interview' with the manager which amounted to no more than a chat in the grounds of the home. He never thought that it was a serious matter or that I needed some privacy."

Maria, who was sexually and physically abused by workers at her home, agreed. She said: "I got no information or explana-

tion about the investigation... The interviews were difficult. I had to pass on sensitive information to people I didn't really trust. Nobody ever said: 'I believe you're telling the truth'."

The NSPCC's key recommendations include: providing more information and consulting with young people when in care, ensuring privacy, improving the investigation procedure, developing independent support and setting up a befriending system. It is also calling for staff who are under investigation to be suspended.

Carol Dey, manager of NSPCC child protection team and organiser of the research, said: "Young people need to be listened to. They need to be believed. And they need the support of the care system if they find themselves in this situation rather than being treated as the guilty ones."

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The Post Office's future is shrouded in doubt. That is what lies behind the threats of industrial action to be raised today

The last post

Does the letter have a future?

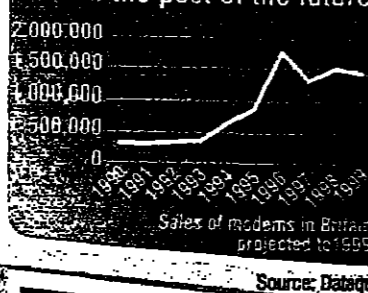
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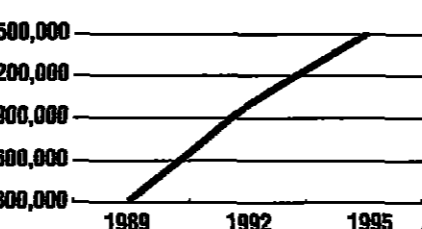
Royal Mail letters: yearly



E-mail: the post of the future



Fax machines in use in Britain



Graphic: Mark Hayman Research: Ben Summers

The Post Office executives might be forgiven for thinking that the Government has got it in for them. Attempts by the one-time monopoly to compete in an increasingly cut-throat market, with rivals ranging from couriers to the Internet, are hampered continually by uncertainty over whether the Royal Mail is to be privatised and by mounting frustration in the ranks.

The organisation, desperately trying to recover from the controversy over Michael Heseltine's botched attempt at privatisation at the end of 1994, was knocked sideways in the November Budget by plans to squeeze more money from its operations.

Plans to make the service more competitive must now be viewed against a much starker financial backdrop. It is not surprising that renewed mutterings from the Government about privatisation have not been welcomed with open arms. They are an unwelcome diversion from the job of running the business.

The challenge faced by the Post Office is enormous. Foreign rivals, most notably its part-privatised Dutch counterpart, are invading its market with vigour and without the shackles that hamper attempts by the UK organisation to expand overseas.

The well-established competition from courier and parcel companies continues unabated and, at the same time, the threat of new technology is

What future for the business?

accelerating. The fax machine is now so ubiquitous, at home and at work, that many people are confident they could ride out a strike at the Royal Mail. The escalation of connections to the Internet allows growing numbers of people to send messages for as little as 1p. A strike might simply accelerate the trend away from the letter.

The Royal Mail is a large purveyor of junk mail

The Royal Mail has not been impotent in responding to the competition. Letters volumes have risen in the 1990s. The Royal Mail has benefited from the growth of direct-mail marketing: it is a large purveyor of junk mail. It has also attempted to become part of the technology revolution, in a relatively modest way. A programme to install computers in the nation's network of 20,000 post office counters might take it further into the electronic age. More directly, there is a £200m investment programme to introduce better technology in an effort to get mail moving faster.

However, these efforts to compete

with the private sector were made more difficult by the Chancellor's decision dramatically to increase the amount the Post Office had been expecting to pay into the Treasury's coffers over the next few years. Instead of a projected payment (the so-called External Financing Limit) of about £178m a year, the Treasury is demanding around £300m each year between 1996 and 1999. That amounts to about the same as the Post Office has provided over the last decade, at a time when competition has never been so fierce.

The pressure means the Post Office either has to improve efficiency on a continuous basis, which will require investment and may provoke industrial relations problems, or it has to raise revenues substantially. The unpalatable fact is that the main source of revenue is still the postage stamp, the price of which will almost inevitably rise later this year, provoking concern among customers and glee among competitors.

The problem for John Roberts, the Post Office's new chief executive, goes beyond the Treasury's thirst for cash. There has been a long-held vision of offering a "seamless" service ranging from designing and printing stationery and letters to storing and posting large quantities of mail for very large users. His Dutch counterpart can play all

these roles and in Britain just uses the Royal Mail to make the final deliveries. But at the moment the Post Office is constrained by the Government from forging the kinds of business alliances it needs to play such a role. For instance it would like to have an airline as a partner rather than being just another user of charter flights. But that is ruled out by Government rules.

According to a Post Office spokesman: "What we really want to do is think much more widely about integrating all kinds of communications. At the moment we still have to ask for permission to get involved in new activities. All too often it is not forthcoming."

The Post Office made a pre-tax profit of £472m in the year to 31 March 1995. There has been no price rise since November 1993, so results for last year – yet to be announced – may not show a substantial increase. But in the first half of this financial year the pre-tax profits were £194m.

The question is how long profits can keep on rolling as long as the Treasury's demands soar and as more nimble players invade the marketplace. If there is to be a renewed attempt at privatisation, it may need to be sooner rather than later if there is to be a business with growth potential to attract investors.

MARY FAGAN

What future for the workers?

Post Office is not honouring its pledge that the first delivery will arrive before 9.30am. They believe that more part-time staff will be taken on to work between 9am and noon to make this very large first delivery, leaving a minimal or non-existent second post, normally in the afternoon.

Officials at the Communication Workers' Union have warned the Post Office that unless they receive assurances today about the future of the service, the union's 155,000 members will be balloted on national strikes. The CWU's 17-strong postal committee could be called into emergency session tomorrow to evaluate the Post Office's response to the union's concerns.

The threat of privatisation, which was temporarily abandoned after a revolt last year by Conservative backbenchers, has contributed to shopfloor unease over the past three years. The prospect of a sell-off re-emerged recently when the Prime Minister said it might find a place in the Conservative general election manifesto.

John Roberts, the Post Office's recently appointed chief executive, says such prime ministerial musings are "unhelpful", but insists that his employees have nothing to fear.

The second delivery is a "key part of the service", he says, and he is deter-

mined to keep a core of full-time employees that will continue to make up around 80 per cent of the workforce. Mr Roberts, who has been in the job for just two months, says he intends to make employee relations one of his priorities and that he wants to make the

The posties' leader is a right-winger keen to avoid a national dispute

Royal Mail a "world-class employer".

The problem is that his predecessor, Bill Cockburn, made similarly emotive remarks, but the message didn't persuade the shopfloor. The main reason for that seems to be the Post Office's introduction of a fashionable devolved management structure in which local managers have been given greater autonomy to bring in temporary staff. These local initiatives have often undermined the workers' faith in the statesmanlike public statements of senior directors about the future of the service.

That the Post Office may be on the verge of a national strike is all the more surprising because it is not as if the "posties" are led by a militant. Alan

Johnson, joint general secretary of the CWU – his colleague Tony Young represents BT workers – is a right-winger and keen to avoid a national dispute. Mr Johnson is a moderniser and a supporter of Tony Blair. He has said he is confident a settlement can be reached.

Many leading local activists do not share his optimism. Left-wingers enjoy a majority of around two-thirds on the CWU committee covering the Royal Mail, and even some of Mr Johnson's political allies are increasingly of the mind that it is time to take on the Post Office. These activists believe that instead of fighting a series of local disputes which the union has to disown for legal reasons, the leadership should unite in a national campaign. They also believe the public might support industrial action if it were aimed partly at defending the second post.

This may leave Mr Johnson with something of a dilemma. He is not a trade union leader who revels in national disputes. He knows from experience that big customers armed with faxes, e-mail and private postal services can survive for a while without the Royal Mail. If he emerges from his talks proclaiming peace in his time, however, many local activists will not believe him. More local disputes are almost inevitable and that might further undermine his own leadership of the union.

BARRIE CLEMENT



Daniel gets real (again)

There's acting, there's method acting and there's Daniel Day-Lewis. Having chained himself to a wall to prepare for the part of one of the Guildford Four

woodworking, so far he has helped to construct a dozen clapboard houses, a tavern and an outhouse.

Having mastered Proctor's carpentry skills, Day-Lewis turned his attention to understanding, feeling and experiencing his personal circum-



Dan uses his hammer. Winona knows an easier way...

and run around with no clothes on to read himself into *The Last of the Mohicans*. I am glad to hear that Day-Lewis's research technique shows no signs of flagging, though this time it has taken a rather puzzling turn. The crew currently filming Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* off the coast of Massachusetts have found that Day-Lewis, playing the farmer John Proctor, has insisted on building sets with them. Apparently under the impression that 17th-century New England farmers spent all their time in frenzied

stances. The actor turned down the lavish accommodation offered him by the producers, and is living in a spartan house on a rural road with only essential facilities. Those familiar with the play will know that Proctor is hanged at its climax – so far Day-Lewis has decided to use conventional acting skills in this scene.

The obsession with method does not seem to have rubbed off on his co-star Winona Ryder, who plays his wife, Elizabeth Proctor. She has rented sumptuous \$6,000 a month digs,

Good buy

Was *Goodbye To All That*, the memoirs of the Labour leadership contender Bryan Gould, a prophetic title? It was only published by Macmillan last year, but yesterday I discovered it in Books Etc in Oxford Street – reduced from £16.99 to £3.99. Cheaper, alas, than most paperbacks...



Another kicking for Jezza

Garden looks far from rosy

Poor Jeremy Isaacs (I hear he does not like the adjective beleaguered) will not have long to recover from the mauling suffered by the Royal Opera House on last night's fly-on-the-wall BBC documentary. Tonight the ROH chief faces a further savaging at the hands of the classical music promoter and opera impresario Raymond Gubbay. They will be on opposite sides at an Oxford Union debate on the National Lottery's propensity for doling out jackpots to elitist institutions.

Gubbay is virtually the only member of the arts establishment prepared to go public about waste, extravagance and restrictive practices in the arts. He tells me he will pull no punches at the debate tonight. "Certainly, there are restrictive practices at the opera house. And it seems to me incredible that while schoolchildren are going without books, the Royal Opera House is moaning, yes

moaning, about getting nearly £20m a year and a £78m hand-out from the lottery, and it is still thrashing around with no definite plans about which building it will be in in 18 months' time."

It sounds as if it could be a fiery evening. Gubbay is himself staging an opera next month, *La Bohème*. He has decided to put it on at the Royal Albert Hall. In the circumstances, that may be a diplomatic move.

Sitting target

Having humbled the adversary Portillo at the battle of Admiralty Arch, the Royal Navy top brass have an even trickier problem to solve. Were Nelson's loss square or round? No one in authority seems to know the answer.

The Navy is working away to get HMS Victory shipshape for the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar – coming up

in 2005 (put it in your diary). Even Nelson's uniform and pipe will be laid out in his cabin as they were on the eve of battle. But when it comes to the appearance of the lavatories they are at a loss.

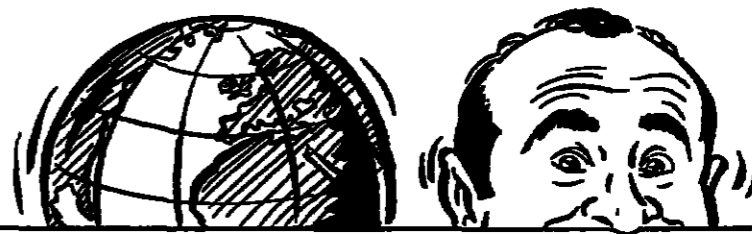
"Endless books and diaries have been consulted, but to no avail," says an insider. Meanwhile, they are opting for the round shape. "We have decided," says a senior admiral, "to take a gamble."

Finger on the pulse

I see the *Daily Telegraph* is still having trouble telling the difference between dead and alive. Barely a month ago the paper precipitately published the obituary of Lord Colyton, still at that point very much alive. And yesterday Paul Johnson was published on the letters page apologising to Lord Sieff, whom he had written off as "the late Lord Sieff". "I hasten to reassure Marcus Sieff's countless friends that he is still very much with us. I apologise to him and to Lady Sieff for this lamentable slip." To make matters worse, in his original article Johnson described Lord Sieff as a friend of his. Johnson blames "an inexplicable confusion of thought" for his error, a goodly phrase which sounds so much better than some of the alternatives that spring to mind.

Eagle Eye

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Brazil	£7.16	£9.94	28%
Canada	£1.75	£3.40	49%
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Foreign Exchange Rates

STERLING			DOLLAR			D-MARK
Country	Spot	1 month 3 months	Spot	1 month 3 months	Spot	
UK	12595	14-12	34-31	1000	0-3	06891
Canada	2124	59-52	100-97	0-3	0-5	03315
US	2465	62-52	161-57	23-21	37-44	10000
Germany	7670	55-39	133-14	49-33	134-21	34789
France	7670	55-39	133-14	105-69	130-150	10277
Italy	24632	77-42	203-182	37-42	134-21	72352
Japan	1260	16-11	327-221	105-69	2-4	134-21
ECU	1260	16-11	327-221	2-4	2-4	25152
Netherlands	4630	10-10	35-27	12579	130-150	
Belgium	38357	138-45	337-243	58-53	49-26	125-75
Norway	2515	63-54	170-158	49-26	31-28	86-31
Ireland	13965	12-5	34-28	19820	4-5	8-10
Norway	13965	12-5	34-28	33880	35-10	138-10
Spain	18076	127-5	344-293	37-42	135-42	135-42
Switzerland	1254	66-20	155-51	22269	61-52	447-430
Switzerland	18094	75-72	207-201	61-52	57-53	105-101
Australia	23069	9-21	45-35	1781	32-22	55-35
Hong Kong	87-1155	87-1155	178-176	27522	4-1	60-40
India	39-53	39-53	275-22	25330	25-22	10354
New Zealand	13222	23-37	87-12	3-755	2-7	9-14
Saudi Arabia	57704	15-15	3-755	14225	30-30	25781
			1000	1-3	103-88	
			0-3	0-5		
			23-21	37-44		
			49-33	134-21		
			105-69	130-150		
			2-4	125-75		
			58-53	86-31		
			4-5	8-10		
			35-10	138-10		
			37-42	135-42		
			61-52	447-430		
			57-53	105-101		
			32-22	55-35		
			4-1	60-40		
			25-22	10354		
			2-7	9-14		
			30-30	25781		
			1-3	103-88		

OTHER SPOT RATES			
Country	Starling	Dollar	
Argentina	19388	10000	
Brazil	57581	102494	
Canada	14949	0.9721	
China	126504	33204	
Egypt	52383	34055	
Ghana	43937	44535	
India	224932	14500	
Indonesia	388496	238470	
Kenya	55293	355850	
Malaysia		0.2887	
Mexico		0.2887	
Nigeria	18106		
Pakistan	555619		
Philippines	403550		
Portugal	251919		
Russia	58500		
Saudi Arabia	79463		
South Africa	457700		
Taiwan	63635		
Thailand	421831		
UAE	54522		
Uganda	18106		
Yemen	55824		
Zambia	347256		
Zimbabwe	251919		

Tourist Rates

E Shore		E Shore		E Shore	
Alaska (Dallas)	23000	France (Paris)	74000	New Zealand (Dallies)	23900
Alaska (Seattle)	24000	Germany (Berlin)	24000	Norway (Oslo)	58000
Alaska (Portland)	446000	Greece (Athens)	3640000	Portugal (Lisbon)	2270000
Canada (Dallas)	51000	Great Britain (London)	117000	Spain (Madrid)	160000
Cuba (Havana)	10000	Italy (Rome)	2380000	Sweden (Stockholm)	100000
Cyprus (Nicosia)	24000	Japan (Tokyo)	2380000	Switzerland (Zurich)	17400
Denmark (Copenhagen)	24000	South Korea (Seoul)	160000	Taiwan (Taipei)	2540000
Holland (Amsterdam)	24000	Thailand (Bangkok)	160000	Thailand (Bangkok)	15000
India (Bombay)	24000	USA (New York)	160000		

Interest Rates

UK Base	8.50%	Germany Discount	3.00%	US Prime	8.75%	Japan Discount	0.50%
France		London	5.00%	Discount	5.25%	Belgium	
Information	4.75%	Canada		90-Day	5.50%	Denmark	3.00%
Italy		Prime	5.75%	Spain		Central	3.00%
Discount	0.00%	Discount		10-Day Repo	9.25%	Switzerland	
Netherlands		Denmark		Sweden		Discount	1.50%
		4.50%		90-Day	8.75%	Forward	4.25%

Bond Yields

Country	5yr	10yr	15yr	20yr	30yr
UK	6.87	8.76	7.30		
US	9.50**	8.30	9.04	5.87	5.79
Canada	9.50**	8.30	9.04	5.87	5.79
Australia	9.75**	8.20	9.45**	6.25	6.10
Germany	3.74	4.48	5.91		
France	7%	5.67	7.94**	6.36	6.26

Country	5yr	10yr	15yr	20yr	30yr
Netherlands	4%	4.58	5.96**	5.79	
Spain	12.50	8.00	10.50		
Belgium	7.50	5.00	6.75		
Sweden	11%	7.25	9%		
ECU	9.50	5.45	7.75		

* = 100% of face value
 ** = 120% of face value

Money Market Rates

	Overnight	7 Day	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
Interbank	4 7/8	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4
Starting CDs		5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4
Local Authority Depos	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4
Wholesale Money Depos		5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4
Treasury Bills (30)		5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4
Dollar CDs		5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4
SWF (1 Year)		5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4

Liffe Financial Futures						
Contract		Settlement price	High/Low for day	Last Contract traded	Open Interest	
Long Gilt	(Mar 96)	114.29	111.30	107.89	38903	138642
German Bond	(Jun 96)	100.08	100.08	99.98	66220	22181
3M Euro	(Jun 96)	78.50	78.50	78.50	2096	0
Italian Bond	(Jun 96)	114.05	110.01	109.01	65021	59974
3M Sterling	(Jun 96)	93.77	93.79	93.79	15559	52735
	(Jun 96)	116.16	116.56	116.56	16882	14604
3M Euro & 3M Euromark	(Mar 96)	94.67			0	0
	(Mar 96)	96.50	96.91	96.57	4	18304
	(Mar 96)	96.77	96.75	96.75	23005	104542
E.C.U.	(Jun 96)	98.48	98.48	98.48	139	7556
Euro GFI	(Jun 96)	98.49	98.47	98.45	657	4040
EUR-IBOR	(Mar 96)	96.38	96.38	96.38	7079	7982
FRSE 100	(Mar 96)	37.20	37.40	36.950	10777	62304
FRSE 250	(Mar 96)	40.96			5122	0
FRSE 500	(Mar 96)	39.57	39.43	39.23	5009	46379

Settlement price: 3707.0	closing offer price				Call/Put	Total/Puts
Series	3650	3700	3750	3800		
January	63/1	22/11	2/44	1/64	--	--
February	64/22	60/59	33/64	16/100	--	--
March	117/42	85/60	57/84	38/115	--	--
April	132/68	102/67	77/115	55/141	--	--

Commodities

INDUSTRIAL COMMODITIES - London Metal Exchange			
Instrument	Cash	3 Month	Volume
Alu	13345-13350	13365-13375	87675
Alu Alloy	13300-13400	14300-35	1028
Copper	2534-35	2443-47	10545
Lead	707-712	598-598	2718
Nickel	7035-35	7035-35	5760
Tin	6225-35	6260-70	1675
Zinc	1014-15	1036-37	14115

Stocks and Commodities Exchange			
Instrument	US	UK	Volume
Stock Volume & changes in prices at 10:30 AM, January 22	25	25	25

LME Stocks		chg	
10000	14400		
93400	400		
38725	7250		
122500	3500		
62000	300		
1675	140		
936250			

PREMIUM METALS				COPPER				SILVER			
per oz./oz.	\$	£	Coin	\$	£	\$	£				
Platinum	465.50	270.00	Britannia	411	267	Kruggerand	386/98	251/68			
Palladium	190.25	84.45	Britannia.5 oz.	208	133	Sovereign	491/85	92/62			
Silver spot	5.46	3.95	Britannia.25 oz.	105	68	Nickels	408/23	205/76			
Gold Bullion	397.30	258.22	Britannia.10 oz.	49	32	Maple Leaf	397/41	258/67			

Source: Silver & Son

Cocoa		Coffee		Russet		Potatoes		Potatoes	
LCE	\$/ton	LCE	\$/ton	LCE	\$/ton	LCE	\$/ton	ATA	Gst/100kg
Mar	906	Jan	121	Jan	1540	Mar	2020	Apr	277
May	929	Mar	176	Mar	1835	Apr	1935	May	281
July	949	May	1825	May	1170	May	2050	Jun	289
Nov	988	Nov	1825	Nov	178	Nov	89	Nov	310

White Sugar		Raw Sugar		Freight		Wheat		Corn		2000 Prices	
LCE	Shannon	LCE	Shannon	LCE	Shannon	LCE	Shannon	LCE	Shannon	LCE	Shannon
Mar	35450	Mar	1680	Jan	825	Jan	122.25	Mar	36250-35400	35700	Self
May	33670	May	1644	Feb	820	Mar	125.5	May	37250-35600	36075	Self
Aug	32420	Jul	1644	Vol	810	May	125.5	Jul	36800-35400	35875	Self
Vol	4,813	Vol	0	Index	1561	Vol	429				

Jan	Maize (No3)**	\$/tonne	150.50	Feb	Soya Oil	\$/100kg	910
Jan/Feb	Copra (t)	\$/tonne	1650	Jan/Feb	Coconut Oil (t)	\$/tonne	6925
Mar	Cotton (NY)	UScent/lb	82.20	Jan	Sunflower Oil	\$/tonne	6157
Feb	Wool	Acent/kg	708.0	Feb	Reprocessed Oil	\$/100kg	300
Feb	Rubber**	Cent/lb	3520	Jan/Feb	Groundnut Oil	\$/tonne	66500

Options: Ethanol/Eth - new crop - 1/100kg/cent; Maize/No3 - 1/100kg/cent; Soybean - 1/100kg/cent; Sunflower - 1/100kg/cent; Copra - 1/100kg/cent; Coconut - 1/100kg/cent; Cotton - 1/100kg/cent; Wool - 1/100kg/cent; Rubber - 1/100kg/cent.

ENERGY		Brent Crude		(\$/barrel) Gasoil		(\$/tonne) WTI		Products †		(\$/tonne)	
IPE	5.30pm	*chg	Yr ago	IPE	closes	*chg	Feb	Spot	CF North West Europe		
Feb	17.80	+0.27	16.67	Jun	16.25	+2.00	Feb	18.45	Landed Gasoline		17/172
Mar	17.24	+0.28	16.96	Feb	16.45	+1.78	Mar	18.06	Alpha		17/172
Apr	16.86	+0.22	16.64	Mar	15.80	+1.80	Apr	17.96	EC Diesel		17/165

	Apr 6, 1984	Mar 27, 1984	Mar 20, 1984	May 1, 1984	Heavy Fuel Oil	Top 100
*Price \$/bbl previous day. Year ago prices show average for week.						
Source: ICG-London Oil Reports. *plus taxes						

*SGCI Indices	Basis date	+Spot	%Day Chg	Dec 31st	%Yr chng	Year ago	% Yr chg
Index:	1970=100	152X	-1.69	203.50	-6.05	173.92	+2.63
Absoluting:	1970=100	278.21	-0.17	287.75	-0.80	292.26	+1.53

Industrial Metals	1977=100	191.60	-4.67	193.32	-3.50	199.60	+16.94
Luxembourg	1970=100	178.66	-0.26	182.71	-4.12	223.62	+16.91
Prepaid Metals	1979=100	503.57	-4.20	499.99	-2.27	499.06	-2.47
					+2.80	184.24	+4.00

Source: Goldhaus, Sachs & Co. *GSD is a trademark and service mark of Goldhaus, Sachs & Co. †Close as of 15 Jan 96

Stock	Std	Mid	Offer	Stock	Std	Mid	Offer
Abbey Life Managed 64	7344		7732	London Life Bond			
Abbey National Managed	1315		1365	M&G Managed Bond	6538		6587.70
Abbey Natl 64 Managed	3440		3642	M&G Managed Income			10017
Abbey Life 64	200		216	M&G Managed Income Bond Ser A	5264		5310
Abbey Life Pre-62 3 Way	6542			M&G Managed	3854		4025
Abbey Multiple Investments	1052		1049	M&G Managed	3541		3522

AAU Medical Supplies Inc	7888	8320	NFU Mutual Fund	1765	521
AUA BSA Ltd 96	7894	1030	Norwich Union	1765	1209
Burrows Transport	7918	7981	Norwich Union	1821	1700
Carpet Management	8042	6817	Norwich Union Managed Life	1800G	1844
Chick House Int Gack	8310B	8631	NPR Managed	200A	1283
Chick House Managed Inv S2	8354A	9099	Pearl Mutual Fund	1949	1650
Roberts	3787	3827	Procter Mutual Fund	9720	168A
Chemical Med Fld Supplies	3219	3382	Procter Mutual Managed	9745	3525
CLEBS Managed	3678	3690			

Colonial Mutual Managed	43292	46-37	Princeton & Wellington Inc	30884	95-02
Concordance Managed 3A	12217	12-04	Stevens Managed SIF	49572	49-13
Corinth Managed A	10235	10-29	Sumner	4988	49-05
Crown Managed A	54535	57-16	Royal Hart Co Income Dist	23827	23-07
CU Feltow Managed	44883	48-08	Royal Life Managed	4204	42-04
Equity Star Equity Managed	2620	26-12	Royal Scottish Growth Managed	8550	85-10
Equity Star Managed	2828	28-17	Saw & Prosper Managed Investor	9448	94-08
FP Managed	7325	73-04	Scottish Available Managed	6500	65-01
			Scottish Flexible Managed	9345	93-05

Friends Prov Managed	3361	3677	Scottish Musical Grange	3222	3394
GA Managed	2263	2456	Scottish Prov Assn For Old Men	3226	2946
Gen Policy	2449	2523	Scottish Prov Assoc Managed	3228	3480
Gen Porting & Colonial	2826	2394	Scottish Widows Fund	3230	3657
Gen Managed	2367	2677	Shades Enhanced Managed	4284	4667
Gen Mkt Spl \$1	2412	2229	Shades Fit Managed	2260	2621
Gen Personnel	2638	2770	Shades Pro Managed	2551	2615
GRE LLA Managed	2454	2448	Student Center	1930	2215

Hs Survival Manager A	6086	6440	Sun Alliance Manager	9970	9929
Hs Survival/Targer Manager	6780	7180	Sun Alliance PG Investment A	7694	7625
Hs Survival/Targer Mkt Growth	2869		Sun Alliance PG Wealth Assets		
Ish Life Global Managed SS	6387	6724	Sun Life Mngd	7622	7620
J Retirement NMO Managed	3226	3954	Sun Life Cn Managed	8080A	8080
J Retirement Scot Amic Managed	1468	5477	Swedish Allcncd	4378	463.5
J Retirement St James Managed	1717	8006	TSP Healthcare	3644	46.9
Laurensen Managed SS	5922	6783	TSP Managed	2243	2243
				3783	3783

Lincoln Select Security A	5495	8284	Windsor Managed	1865	4080
Lincoln Select Security A	6079	6470	Windsor Growth Managed S2	7740	8819
Lincoln Int Angles	6182	5781	Windsor Investor Crds	3828	3822
Lincoln Int Managed 3	6486	5584	Windsor Real Ret Managed	7625	8087
Lincoln Int Managed 4	2845	2890	Windsor Unit Fund Mkt	1847	1894
Lincoln Int Schrodes S2	4389	4929	Windsor Life Managed		



Becker taken to the brink by Rusedski

Tennis

Greg Rusedski went close to causing the first major upset of the Australian Open before losing in five sets to Boris Becker, the fourth seed. Becker eventually won 6-4, 3-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-3, but only after Rusedski had led two sets to one and was threatening Becker's serve at the start of the fourth set.

Rusedski's main weapon is his serve, and he went close to breaking his speed record of 137mph, frequently hitting 130mph, with a best of just under 136mph. Becker often had no answer and his frustration showed as he made several irritated comments to the umpire.

The eighth game of the fourth set and the seventh of the fifth set proved the turning points. On both occasions, Becker suddenly got the measure of Rusedski's serve. Rusedski's volleys lost their punch and Becker went on to win in two hours and 49 minutes.

Rusedski said: "He showed why he's a great player out there. If you give him a bit of a chance, he makes it go on for

ever. That's how he turned the match around. I thought I had a chance throughout but you can never feel you've won against Becker until you've won it."

Becker, who had not won a match at the Australian Open since the second round in 1992, said: "I've broken a jinx by winning. I wasn't nervous, in fact quite the contrary, I was too relaxed. But in the fourth set I realised Greg had a weaker side and I was able to exploit that to my advantage."

Rusedski's defeat leaves Tim Henman flying a lone flag for Britain in the singles. He plays Jonas Bjorkman today after securing his place in the second round with a superb four-set victory over Petr Korda.

He fought back from a set down to win 5-7, 7-6, 6-3, 6-4 and now has the chance to reach the third round of a Grand Slam tournament for the first time.

Henman should have won the opening set after leading 4-2. He then lost his service when 5-4 up in the second set, after making a series of groundstroke errors, and could then have gone on to lose the match. But he regained his sense of purpose and built a 6-1 lead in the tie-break, finally

taking it 7-4 on his fourth set point when Korda put a simple forehand into the net.

A break in the third set for a 4-2 lead proved the decisive moment, and as the match moved into the fourth set, Korda looked increasingly tired. Henman missed two match points at 5-3 on his opponent's serve, but finished the match with a love game after a final ace.

"I played somewhere between well and very well," he said. "I probably played better last week [in Sydney] but it was a different sort of match today. I served very well - that is the difference between now and a few months ago. I can serve well for longer stretches."

"I'm obviously very pleased to have won but I think there are areas for improvement. I play well in some matches but not in others, so in my next match I need to knuckle down and produce a good performance."

Clare Wood failed to progress, losing 6-4, 6-1 to Conchita Martinez. Her defeat capped a miserable time for the British No 1, who suffered a ligament injury playing at a charity fair in July 1994 when her world ranking was at a career-high 77. She dropped to 232 after the lay-off caused by her injury and was Britain's sole women's singles entrant, ranked 179.

She broke Martinez three times in the opening set, but Martinez gradually found her rhythm and won with an ace after 71 minutes. "I wanted to go to the net more," Wood said. "But she keeps up such a good length that it was difficult. I'm disappointed to have lost, but I suppose winning three matches in the qualifying tournament is a good start to the year."

Pete Sampras, the men's No 1 who feared an early exit after suffering a bout of flu, showed few lingering effects of the illness by beating Richard Fromberg 7-5, 6-3, 6-2. The unseeded Stefan Edberg began his final Australian campaign with a hard-fought 7-6, 7-5, 3-6, 5-7, 6-1 victory over Jiri Novak.

Monica Seles, the women's No 1, ignored the pain from a lingering groin strain to extend her perfect record at the event with a 6-3, 6-0 victory over the American qualifier Janet Lee.



Close call: Rusedski's serves rattled Becker, but he was let down by his volleying Photograph: Chris Cole/Empics



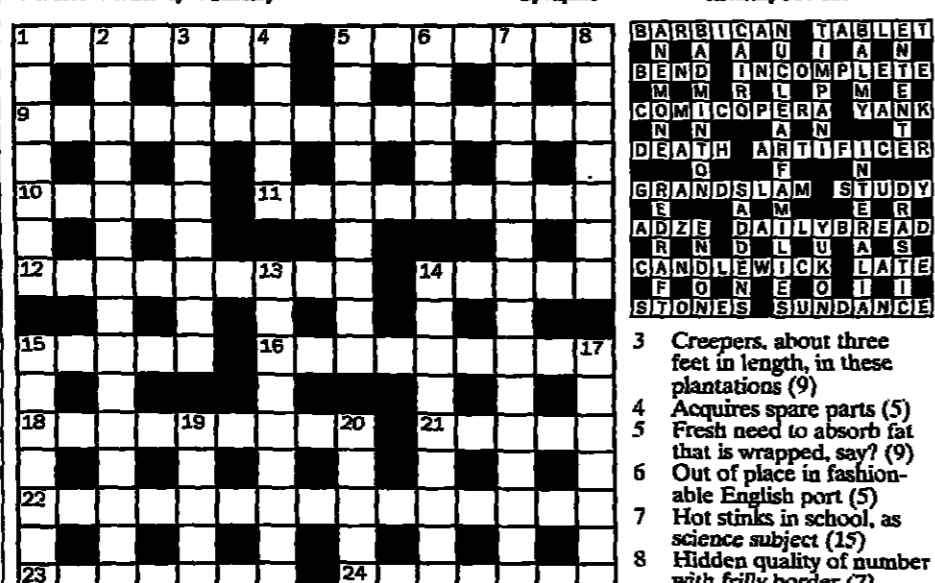
Sole survivor: Tim Henman came back from a set down yesterday to be the only Briton in the second round of the singles Photograph: Mark Baker/Reuters

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

in association with



No. 2885, Wednesday 17 January By Aquila Yesterday's Solution



- ACROSS**
- Red-hot water-heater, from the sound of it (7)
 - Going by order of shorter English dictionary, with a long appendix (7)
 - Freeing of Poles in new dating element? (15)
 - Cautious about putting church alongside a railway (5)
 - Lumper, perhaps, chap wears first? (9)
 - With no-one up, original verdict is to stand (9)
 - Decline is light around city area (5)
 - Birds found in another nesting-site (5)
 - Garden feast helps retired people to keep warm (9)
 - Dandy garden plant (9)
 - Silent film? (5)
 - Dexterous sort gets finger caught in trap fories set (15)
 - Anguish of the French second couple (7)
 - Right smartly suffering with people in poor health? (7)
- DOWN**
- Cocktail only taken in combination? (7)
 - Salad seedlings mess - add currants, perhaps (7,3,5)

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Premier League vetoes the Intertoto Cup

Football

Premier League clubs yesterday gave the thumbs down to this summer's Intertoto Cup and their unanimous support to Tottenham and Wimbledon in their battle with Uefa, European football's governing body.

The two clubs were last week banned for a season from European competition after the shambles of last year's Intertoto tournament, in which they fielded under-strength teams, which has cost English football a Uefa Cup place in 1996/97.

However, the Premiership chief executive, Rick Parry, said the decision not to compete this

coming close season was taken "purely on practical considerations". Clearly, however, chairmen are unhappy that the two London clubs have been made scapegoats - as is the Football Association, which is backing an appeal by Spurs and Wimbledon to have the suspension lifted.

Meanwhile, Uefa yesterday insisted it would maintain its three-foreigner limit this season. The decision puts it in conflict with the European Union's highest court, which ruled last month that the limit on foreigners is illegal and should be abolished. Uefa's stance - in the "interest of continuity and fairness" - also puts it at odds with the Premier League.

Rangers have completed the signing of the Dutch international striker, Peter van Vossen, 27, in a straight swap which has taken the Russian forward, Oleg Salenko, to the Turkish club, Istanbulspor. Osvaldo Ardiles, the former Tottenham manager, is to take charge of the Japanese club, Shimizu S-Pulse.

A foot injury has forced Mark Pembroke, the Sheffield Wednesday midfielder, to withdraw from the Welsh squad to face Italy in Terni next week.

NORTHERN IRELAND FIXTURES (1996)
World Cup qualifying Group 6: 1996: Sat 31 Aug: Ukraine (H), Sat 8 Oct: Armenia (A), Sat 9 Nov: Germany (A), Sat 14 Dec: Albania (H), 1997: Sat 29 Mar: Portugal (H), Wed 2 Apr: Ukraine (A), Wed 30 Apr: Armenia (A), Wed 20 Aug: Germany (H), Wed 10 Sept: Albania (A), Sat 11 Oct: Portugal (A).

Burns has Hearts on his mind

Tommy Burns yesterday mapped out his first desired destination for his Celtic team, even if he cannot give the estimated time of arrival.

The Parkhead chief hopes the game against Hearts today will produce a victory to mark another signpost on the road to overtaking Rangers and "becoming the best in Scotland".

Celtic, unbeaten in 17 league games, can cut the gap to just two points at the top of the Scottish Premier League by winning at Tynecastle in their remaining game in hand.

"We still have a long way to go to reach where I eventually want us to be," Burns said. "We are reaching out to be the best

that we can be and that is still a long, long way off.

"The potential at this club is enormous, and we have made progress. Possibly we have got down the road quicker than we imagined. But the first step would definitely be to become the best in this country - that is the challenge in front of us."

"We are not kidding ourselves or wanting to run before we can walk by thinking about European ambitions. At the moment, Hearts is the only thing that concerns us and winning that match and keeping up our run of form."

Celtic are set to be unchanged after impressive away wins at Raith last Tuesday and

Aberdeen on Sunday. Hearts were crushed 4-0 at Tynecastle and 3-1 at Celtic Park earlier in the season but Jim Jefferies' side are now full of confidence.

"They have been playing well but we are only thinking about ourselves," Burns said.

Hearts have won four of their last five games, including three in a row for the first time in 15 months, and Jefferies is contemplating one change from the team which beat Falkirk on Saturday. Young defender Allan McManus, who at 21 has played barely a handful of games, could make way for ex-Ranger Dave McPherson. Paul Smith is also on stand-by for a midfield place.

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